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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/808,966	03/25/2004	Will Shatford	46834-1200	7063
21611 7590 12/28/2007 SNELL & WILMER LLP (OC) 600 ANTON BOULEVARD SUITE 1400 COSTA MESA, CA 92626			EXAMINER FIDEI, DAVID	
			ART UNIT 3728	PAPER NUMBER
			MAIL DATE 12/28/2007	DELIVERY MODE PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary

Application No. **##**

10/808,966

Applicant(s)

SHATFORD ET AL.

Examiner

David T. Fidei

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 30 July 2007.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1,3,4,10,12-14 and 16-28 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 16-28 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1 and 10 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 3,4 and 12-14 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

Election/Restrictions

1. This application contains claims 16-28 drawn to an invention nonelected with traverse in the reply filed on December 19, 2005. A complete reply to the final rejection must include cancellation of nonelected claims or other appropriate action (37 CFR 1.144) See MPEP § 821.01.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

2. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

3. The factual inquiries set forth in *Graham v. John Deere Co.*, 383 U.S. 1, 148 USPQ 459 (1966), that are applied for establishing a background for determining obviousness under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) are summarized as follows:

1. Determining the scope and contents of the prior art.
2. Ascertaining the differences between the prior art and the claims at issue.
3. Resolving the level of ordinary skill in the pertinent art.
4. Considering objective evidence present in the application indicating obviousness or nonobviousness.

4. Claims 1 and 10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lawrence et al., (U.S. Pat. No. 5,553,708).

As to claim 1, Lawrence discloses a container for light bulbs comprising a seamless tube of puncture resistant plastic (Lawrence Fig 1 and 7 ref 26; see also column 4, lines 46-50) having an open end and sealed at the other end (Fig 1 generally) and means for sealing the open end for a glass shard puncture resistant gas impervious container (Fig 8 the cable strap ref 28). The difference between the claimed subject matter and Lawrence resides in the tube being 2 mil and being about three inches to about three feet long.

It would have been an obvious matter of design choice to construct the tube of any reasonable parameters such as 2 mil and about three inches to about three feet long, since such a modification would have involved a mere change in the size of a component. A change in size is generally recognized as being within the level of ordinary skill in the art. In re Rose, 105 USPQ 237 (CCPA 1955). Also, it has been held that where the only difference between the prior art device and the claimed device was a recitation of relative dimensions, the claimed device was not patentably distinct from the prior art device, Gardner v. TED Systems, Inc., 725 F.2d 1338, 220 USPQ 777 (Fed. Cir. 1984), cert. Denied, 469 U.S. 830, 2325 USPQ 232 (1984), see M.P.E.P. 2144.04 (IV).

As to claim 10, Lawrence discloses a heavy paper liner (Column 4, line 67 and continued on Column 5, lines 1-9) disposed in a light mil plastic bag (Column 4, lines 47-55).

Allowable Subject Matter

5. Claims 3, 4 and 12-14 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Response to Arguments

6. In view of Applicant's amendment to claim 1, the rejection of claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph has been withdrawn.

With regard to Lawrence et al it is argued there is not shown a disposal container for spent fluorescent bulbs comprising a tube of 2 mil puncture resistant plastic having an open end and a sealed end, the tube being from about three inches to about three feet long, and means for sealing the open end after a spent fluorescent bulb is inserted inside the tube, thereby providing a glass shard puncture resistant gas impervious container for the fluorescent bulb, page 8 of remarks. With regard to the functional recitations nothing is defined distinguishing the present invention over Lawrence et al. A disposal container for spent fluorescent bulb is a matter of intended use that does not distinguish over the bag of Lawrence inasmuch as the bag can contain spent fluorescent light bulbs. Additionally, it is well settled that it is possible for functional language to define structure, but that where no distinguishing structure has been defined, the

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claim is not patentable and is fully met by the reference. In re Swinehart, 169 USPQ 226. See also General Electric v. United States, 198 USPQ 73 which further reinforced the concept that functional language which defines no structure cannot distinguish over the prior art. Here, Lawrence et al discloses a container comprising a tube of 4 mil puncture resistant plastic having an open and a sealed end the tube being about 4 feet long, see col. 5, line 30. and means 28 for sealing the open end thereby providing a glass shard puncture resistant gas impervious container for the fluorescent bulb.

The difference between the claimed subject matter and Lawrence resides in the tube being 2 mil and being about three inches to about three feet long. However, such differences merely involve the dimensional parameters of a part or bag. A change in size is generally recognized as being within the level of ordinary skill in the art. In re Rose, 105 USPQ 237 (CCPA 1955). Also, it has been held that where the only difference between the prior art device and the claimed device was a recitation of relative dimensions, the claimed device was not patentably distinct from the prior art device, Gardner v. TED Systems, Inc., 725 F.2d 1338, 220 USPQ 777 (Fed. Cir. 1984), cert. Denied, 469 U.S. 830, 2325 USPQ 232 (1984), see M.P.E.P. 2144.04 (IV). For these reasons it is submitted claim 1 is not patentable over the disclosure of Lawrence et al.

With respect to claim 10, a liner is defined by dictionary.com as a protective covering that protects an inside surface. Each of the sixty four paper board tube-like sleeves define a liner in that each form a protective covering for the fluorescent bulb that is located inside the bag. There is nothing inherent in the meaning of liner that distinguishes over the tubes disclosed by Lawrence et al.

Applicant's remark with respect to patent Cullen is persuasive and the rejections thereover have not been maintained.


Conclusion

7. **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL.** Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

8. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to David T. Fidei whose telephone number is (571) 272-4553. If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Mickey Yu can be reached on (571) 2724562. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.


David T. Fidei
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 3728

Dtf
December 20, 2007